

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
ARIZONA ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS TASK FORCE**

**April 10, 2008  
1:30 p.m., MST**

The Arizona English Language Learners (ELL) Task Force met in Hearing Room 1 of the Senate Building, 1700 W. Washington Street, Phoenix, Arizona. Mr. Alan Maguire, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 1:32 p.m. MST.

**1. Call to Order**

Present:

Mr. Alan Maguire, Chairman

Dr. John Baracy

Mr. Jim DiCello

Dr. Eugene Garcia

Ms. Margaret Dugan

Ms. Johanna Haver

Ms. Eileen Klein

Ms. Anna Rosas

Absent:

Ms. Karen Merritt

A quorum was present for the purpose of conducting business.

**2. Approval of February 14, 2008 minutes of Task Force meeting**

Dr. Eugene Garcia asked if agendas could be sent to Task Force members a week in advance of meetings to allow members to read over the packets and be prepared to discuss those items. He was willing to make a motion for this if necessary. He also commented that the minutes need to be presented and approved in a more timely fashion. Mr. Alan Maguire stated that he would try to ensure that materials were given to members in a timely fashion.

Mr. Jim DiCello moved to approve of the February 14, 2008 minutes of the Task Force. The motion was seconded by Ms. Anna Rosas. The February 14, 2008 minutes of the Task Force meeting were approved unanimously.

**3. Presentation, discussion, and possible action on an amendment of the Grouping Process section of the 9/15/07 Structured English Immersion ELD Models regarding eligibility for the use of an Individual Language Learner Plan in the case of low ELL incidence within a grade band**

Mr. Alan Maguire discussed the Task Force's review process for alternative models sent in by districts and schools. In the first phase of the process, the district or school submits an alternate model or a proposed change to the Task Force approved models. The Task Force permits the district or school to speak and to answer questions about their models. In the second phase of the process, after alternate models have been submitted, ADE staff members work with the district or school to develop the concept into correct language that will work within statute. This process is time-consuming, as the details can be complex. This process is addressed today under Agenda Item Four, in which a progress report is given on the status of alternate models. Then, the alternate proposed model is brought to the Task Force for action. At this third stage, if a model could be applicable to more than one district, the language is adjusted so that it is a complete model which can be used by other districts.

Mr. Maguire moved to the agenda item: presentation, discussion, and possible action on an amendment of the Grouping Process section of the 9/15/07 Structured English Immersion ELD Models regarding eligibility for the use of an Individual Language Learner Plan (ILLP) in the case of low ELL incidence within a grade band. He asked Ms. Adela Santa Cruz, ADE's Director of Program Effectiveness in the Office of English Language Acquisition Services, to speak to the Task Force about this issue. Ms. Santa Cruz described a proposed amendment to the Structured English Immersion ELD Models approved by the Task Force 9/15/07, which requires students to be grouped into classes based on class size standards using the elementary or middle grades and high school Grouping Prioritization Method. The proposed amendment would permit schools that have 16 or fewer ELLs within a three-grade span, including kindergarten, to provide instruction through the development of ILLPs created for each ELL student.

Mr. Maguire stated that he had met with Mr. John Stollar to discuss the details of this amendment to decide what is a low incidence school and when it makes sense to use the ILLP. Based on ADE staff discussions and examination of school data, Mr. Stollar recommended using ILLPs when there are 16 or fewer ELL students in a three-grade span, rather than 16 or fewer ELLs in the school. This amendment allows schools to retain these children in the mainstream classroom with ILLPs focused on fulfilling the requirements of the law.

Dr. Eugene Garcia asked why the number 16 was used. Ms. Santa Cruz stated that the number came from the original model document. Dr. Garcia asked if it were more reasonable to have a range; for example, from 17 to 25 students? Ms. Santa Cruz stated she anticipated some leniency, as 17 or 18 would still be very low incidence. Ms. Eileen Klein stated that the number 16 was from the discussion that this size was too small to create a separate class. Ms. Santa Cruz stated that she knows of 10 schools where this amendment might apply. Mr. Maguire stated that he recalled from data he examined earlier that there were a fair number of schools whose few ELLs had a high rate of reclassification to proficiency.

Mr. Maguire stated that the three-grade span was recommended because schools might have a large number in kindergarten and first grade, but few in higher grades. He stated that the number 16 is also found in other ADE documents in reporting requirements and categorization documents, so it made sense to use 16. Mr. Maguire stated that he and Mr. Stollar had applied

the amendment to various actual ELL school counts; they looked at the ratio of ELL students to native English-speaking students, and as long as the ratio was low, the amendment works well.

Ms. Klein asked the rationale of three-grade spans. Mr. Maguire stated it came through similar discussions with Mr. Stollar; they applied the grade span concept to real data to determine what worked best. Ms. Klein said this concerns her, as this will be a change to the approved model without solid evidence of the consequences. She asked if allowing ADE more flexibility would be better. Mr. Maguire stated that they could search the data to determine how many schools fall into this example and show this data to the Task Force, basing a number upon the data analysis. Dr. Garcia expressed a concern that this approach would only capture this year's statistics, which could change next year. He praised the idea to allow more flexibility. Mr. Maguire speculated that perhaps fifty schools might fall into this low incidence category.

Dr. John Baracy mentioned that Ms. Santa Cruz had said ADE was working with a school district on this matter and asked what guidelines they were using. Ms. Santa Cruz stated they were using the models as a guideline. She stated they were looking at schools with low incidence in kindergarten and possibly using the ILLP in that situation. Dr. Baracy stated that Ms. Santa Cruz stated an ILLP is not unlike an IEP and asked if ILLPs would have the same standing as IEPs. Ms. Santa Cruz stated that they would be careful in monitoring to ensure students are receiving the appropriate number of hours of ELD. The ILLP does not take away any of the ELD requirements for these students, but only modifies where the lessons will be administered.

Mr. Jim DiCello asked if the amendment were approved, would it eliminate the need for an alternate model from schools with this issue? Ms. Santa Cruz stated that if schools meet the rest of the model requirements and this amendment addresses their issue, then yes, the amendment would eliminate the need for an alternate model for those affected schools.

Mr. Maguire asked if the Task Force would be ready to vote on this amendment. Ms. Klein commented that while it would be nice to have the data backing up the numbers, she understands the needs of school districts planning for the fall and the need to get this modified quickly if it will reduce the need for alternate model proposals. She asked if there were a way to build into the model a flexibility which would allow ADE to consider options like this without the hard numbers. Mr. Maguire stated that the Task Force is already providing flexibility with this proposed change which falls outside the law. He expressed that it would be better footing for ADE to give stricter guidelines. He was concerned about making it an administrative case-by-case decision. Ms. Margaret Dugan stated there were a few districts ready to go on a model using this amendment. She hoped it would be possible to vote on the amendment today and return with data at a later date, when the Task Force could talk further about flexibility. This action would alleviate the need for several districts to submit alternative models. Ms. Santa Cruz stated that ADE has been in conversation with different school districts, working with them to meet their needs.

Dr. Garcia offered an amendment that would use a range, such as 16-20 ELLs, rather than 16 ELLs. He stated that the use of a range would provide flexibility and then the Task Force could

listen to the data analysis later. Ms. Anna Rosas said that a range isn't needed in the language as it says "16 or fewer" which already gives a range of 1-16. Mr. Maguire stated that they would replace the language to reflect a range of maximum. Dr. Baracy asked Ms. Santa Cruz if ADE would have a problem with the range of numbers. Ms. Santa Cruz stated she did not want to make judgments about a particular number, but that ADE would try to work with districts. Mr. DiCello commented that the language was permissive, allowing - but not requiring - the use of an ILLP. Ms. Johanna Haver wanted to specify that the students were in a three-grade span with numbers spread out, not grouped all in one grade, such as in the case of 20 ELLs in first grade and none in second or third grade.

Dr. Garcia moved to adopt the amendment with the proposed language of 20 instead of 16. Dr. Baracy seconded the motion. He asked that the Chairman review with them when it was appropriate to amend the original SEI models rather than create an alternative model to handle this situation. Mr. Maguire stated that there seemed to be a great deal of work for ADE to create an alternative model which only changed one tiny thing that was different than the original Task Force adopted models. It made more sense to look back at the approved model to see if it was possible to expand the flexibility a little to allow this small change. If there were a model requiring extensive change, then this would not be under discussion. It was only because the rest of the model remained the same with only one minor adjustment that the idea of an amendment rather than a full alternative model was considered.

Mr. Maguire asked if there was further discussion. The motion passed unanimously. The amendment will be posted on the ADE website. Ms. Klein asked that the next time an amendment is proposed, data supporting the proposal should be presented, as they shouldn't consider changing the model every time a concern is raised. Dr. Garcia commented that if modifying the model helps students, then the Task Force should consider modifying the model.

#### **4. Update on pending Alternate Proposed Models, DISCUSSION ONLY**

Mr. Alan Maguire stated that this discussion is simply to update the Task Force on the progress of proposed alternative models submitted by school districts. Ms. Adela Santa Cruz referred to the districts that have made submissions. One proposed model has been submitted by the ALPHA Group, including Murphy, Phoenix ESD, Tolleson, and Isaac. These districts planned and submitted together, their model is largely similar, with only a few exceptions. Murphy had an attachment with their alternate model that was a little different than the others.

Ms. Santa Cruz discussed some of the proposed features of the alternate models including structured mixing, which affects how ELLs are grouped; flexibility in time allocations; and the content-based instruction is an issue as well. In addition, they propose to mix in their classrooms students with different proficiencies with a different prioritization level than is found in the approved models and a two-hour exception to the four-hour block found in the approved SEI models. One school district provided very clear classroom distribution charts that well comported to the SEI models. ADE continues to have discussions with these districts.

In addition, Osborn District would like to mix ELLs with non-ELL students. The basis for the structure of the model is SIOP rather than the approved ELD models. Their proposed model uses objectives which are the same as the mainstream native-English classrooms rather than the objectives given in the SEI models. Osborn also has included information on higher performance in dual language programs, which the district included in its proposal as well.

The Crane District proposal contains several pieces, with K-3, 4-6, and 7-8 groupings. The K-3 model utilizes the Reading First program: Students would complete a year in the federal Reading First program and documentation of assessments would be sent to ADE. According to the AZELLA, the K-3 students have been maintaining at an 18% reclassification rate for five years. The ELL students are mixed with non-ELL students for two hours, and class grouping is not determined by AZELLA but by the Reading First assessments. In the remaining two hours, ELL students are grouped together by AZELLA proficiency. There are two addenda to this model, including the Reading First classroom practices and the classroom practices for all ELL students.

Mr. Maguire expressed hope that by the next meeting, ADE and Crane district would bring back a version of this proposed alternate model which the Task Force will be able to discuss and vote upon.

Dr. Eugene Garcia commented that during the March Task Force meeting, he asked for a discussion about the rubric created by ADE staff for use as a tool in responding to districts submitting proposed alternative models. He stated that he understood the time constraints ADE was working under in their need to respond to districts, but he expressed concern that the rubric they were using to judge alternative models might not be correctly aligned with the models approved by the Task Force. He said he found four or five areas where the requests of the rubric did not line up very well with the law. He stated that he found areas where a proposed model could still fit within the confines of the law but be different than the approved models, and eligible for Task Force consideration. Dr. Garcia stated that perhaps they would not be able to have this discussion today as Mr. Stollar was not present. Dr. Garcia stated that he believed ADE needs to move beyond the draft instrument rubric to one that is formally adopted by this Task Force so that ADE would have better, appropriate, and authoritative feedback and assessment of whether a model meets the law. He requested a discussion at a future meeting where Mr. Stollar would be able to participate and in the interim was planning to meet with Mr. Stollar with his specific questions.

Mr. Maguire asked if Cartwright, which is part of the Alpha Group, would be participating in their proposal or submitting a proposed alternate model of their own. Ms. Santa Cruz stated that ADE had not received any submissions from Cartwright but if they approve the model or models submitted by the Alpha Group members, Cartwright could certainly choose to use that model. Ms. Eileen Klein asked about assessments and the use of alternative assessments. Mr. Maguire confirmed that the Crane district wants to use the Reading First assessment instead of AZELLA for the first year of their ELL program, which would be a two- or three-year program. Ms. Anna Rosas asked if the packet received by Task Force members applied only to Crane Elementary

District. Ms. Santa Cruz stated that the proposals are district-specific. Crane is asking for something different for its ELL population based on the program that is currently being used.

## **5. Presentation and Discussion of teacher certification requirements of the SEI Models**

Mr. Alan Maguire referred to proposed language to modify the teacher certification requirements language in the Task Force approved models to better align to Arizona State Board rule law. This would not be an action item during this meeting, but Mr. Maguire asked that the Task Force members look it over to discuss for action at the next Task Force meeting. This is an issue of concern to the field.

Ms. Margaret Dugan commented that this amendment was an attempt to bring the Highly Qualified requirements and the state requirements on certification into line so that there is one standard for all teachers. This prevents there being further barriers keeping teachers from teaching ELL students. Further questions can be directed to herself or Jan Amator, Deputy Associate Superintendent at ADE who is in charge of certification. The intent in the model was for ELLs to have the same opportunity to be taught by a Highly Qualified teacher as native English students.

## **6. Preliminary review of the Alternate Proposed Models received prior to February 27, 2008**

Mr. Alan Maguire stated that there are five alternative proposed models which were received by ADE prior to February 27, 2008. He invited those districts to speak about their proposals and answer any questions that the Task Force might have. Dr. Eugene Garcia asked if there would be action on any of the proposed alternate models. Mr. Maguire stated that this was only a recognition that the Task Force has received the proposals and a chance for districts to speak to the Task Force and answer to questions. This is the first time these proposals have been brought to the Task Force, though these districts have been in dialogue with ADE. There will be continuing dialogue with ADE until the proposals reach a stage of readiness for the Task Force to discuss and vote on them at a future Task Force meeting.

The first received proposed alternative model was from Glendale UHSD and is very specific to their district. Ms. Adela Santa Cruz Student presented the model information to the Task Force. She stated that placement would be on a case-by-case basis using criteria that the district has delineated. The district is looking at ELL students who have been in Arizona schools for at least two years; who either approach, meet, or exceed the AIMS subtest of reading and writing; who are Intermediate on the AZELLA; and, who are juniors and seniors in year high school and have composite AZELLA scores that show a history of improvement. These students must have earned a grade of "C" or better in all of their content area classes. Glendale UHSD wants to use the ILLP process to provide a program to allow these current ELL students to graduate with their cohort class and to achieve proficiency in English. The time allocations and other components of the Task Force model would still be used.

Next to present was Mr. Tom Jackson, Superintendent of Window Rock USD, Navajo Nation. With him was Ms. Susan Stucker, the ELL coordinator, with a Masters in Secondary Spanish education, ESL, and school administration, and has been a high school teacher twenty-three years. Ms. Jennifer Wheeler, language and culture coordinator, was also present to speak. She has a Masters in English, is completing her doctorate in English, and is from the Navajo Nation. She created the Navajo language course for Phoenix College and ASU.

Ms. Wheeler asked the Task Force to consider and approve Window Rock USD's proposed alternative model as a way to value the Native American language and culture while still demonstrating proficiency in English. Proposition 203 and the state statute were created with immigrant children in mind and do not take into consideration the educational needs of Arizona's indigenous populations. The Window Rock USD accepts the Task Force's approved models with the exception of isolating ELL-identified students. At the elementary level, the district has 3 Emergent, 56 Basic, and 96 Intermediate proficiency ELL students. In order to achieve the goals of the ELL Task Force in the most economical manner, the district wishes to balance classrooms by mixing ELL with non-ELL students as role models. This grouping of students will be the least restrictive environment.

At the middle school level, Window Rock USD has 9 Basic and 54 Intermediate ELL students. Interdisciplinary teams teach to small numbers of students. ELLs will be taught by one interdisciplinary team per grade level by teachers who have the qualifications set by the Task Force approved models. The teams' focus will be on the students' most current AZELLA reports. If necessary, the district will balance classrooms by mixing ELL with non-ELL students as role models. The district does not wish to cross grade level because doing so affects ELL students' self-esteem. At the high school level, the district would use the same program. There are 2 Emergent, 11 Basic, and 104 Intermediate ELLs at the high school level. Again, at the high school, an interdisciplinary team will work with the ELL students to ensure they do not fall behind. The ELL students' needs are also based on the AZELLA tests. Ms. Wheeler stated that if the Task Force approves their model, it is likely that other districts located on the Navajo Reservation also will adopt this model.

Marana was the next school district to present. Ms. Jean Lewis, Director of State and Federal Programs, stated that many schools in her district have fewer than 16 ELLs in a three-grade span, and the district is looking for more flexibility to meet the needs of their students. The amendment approved today will cover the district's needs. Dr. Baracy asked if the amendment fully covered their needs. Ms. Lewis stated that she had been considering 16 as the number but with the number now set at 20, it may increase the number of schools able to use the ILLP as an option for their low incidence of ELLs. She thanked the ELL Task Force for this flexibility.

Ms. Stacy Hoffman, ELL Specialist, and Ms. Sharon Matt-Gongora Director of Curriculum, represented Deer Valley USD. There are 36 schools in Deer Valley USD, a wide variety of schools. With the adoption of the amendment made earlier in the meeting, 12 of their schools will qualify. Therefore, their proposal is now for only four of their schools. Nine schools have

high ELL populations where the Task Force approved model can be implemented. They met with ADE and were instructed to establish criteria for their schools; the criteria Deer Valley USD established is high. Deer Valley has high exit rates at their schools that have 20 to 60 ELL students. The four schools in question have more than 20 ELLs per three-grade level grade span, and the district would like the option of using ILLPs for these students because they have been showing high levels of growth. At least 75% of the ELLs would have to be at the Intermediate level or above at each school, less than 16 ELLs at each grade level, and less than 10% ELLs at a school site. The classification would need to be above 12% exit rate and growth in proficiency on the AZELLA would need to be at least 50% to qualify for this program. Ms. Hoffman stated that she had brought documentation to prove that the four schools would qualify for this proposed alternate model. She stated that overall her district has a 20.1% reclassification rate as of last year, and that some schools have had 32% and 58% reclassification rates.

Dr. Garcia asked about the allocation per student, which was listed as \$1900 per student for the Deer Valley proposed alternate model, as opposed to an estimated \$3000 per student for the Task Force approved models. He asked if this included federal dollars. Ms. Hoffman stated that it does not include federal funds but does include the Group B weight. In the original budget request Deer Valley USD sent to ADE they estimated needing 65 teachers for the Task Force approved models for their incremental costs.

Mr. Maguire asked if anyone was present to represent the Charter Foundation Amerischools Academy. No one was present, and Mr. Maguire referred the Task Force members to their packets to review the Amerischools Academy materials.

## **7. Presentation and Discussion of Training Program for School District Personnel on Structured English Immersion Models**

This item was held because Mr. Stollar was not present to address the Task Force.

## **8. Presentation and Discussion of Upcoming Task Force Activities**

Mr. Alan Maguire stated that the next ELL Task Force meeting will be on May 8. Dr. Eugene Garcia asked about the possible actions by the Task Force on proposed alternate models. The law states they can approve, reject, or provide limited approval subject to limitations approved by the State Board. He asked for clarification on this third option. Mr. Maguire stated they would look into this.

## **9. Call to the Public**

Mr. Alan Maguire made a call to the public at 2:45pm. First to speak was Ms. Noemi Cortes from the Osborn ESD. She stated that Osborn met with ADE on March 26 to discuss their proposed alternative model. ADE misinterpreted their proposed model, thinking it was a dual



language model. She wanted to clarify that this is not the case. They stated in their classroom practices that the English Language Proficiency Standards are a part of their curriculum, and the Arizona Standards are the focus of the mainstream classrooms. SIOP will be used in the instructional framework. This is not to say that the DSI will not be utilized. The superintendent, two other principals, and she attended ADE's training. They have the DSI and intend to incorporate it into their classrooms.

Dr. Lynn Thompson, Assistant Superintendent, Crane ESD, spoke next. She wished to answer some questions the Task Force raised about their proposed alternative model. She stated that Crane is in its fifth year as a Reading First district and its third year as Reading First K-8 program, not just K-3. Their program structure is such that all the mandates of K-3 are used throughout their entire districts, so that even their middle schools are affected: all decisions are assessment based. For their partial alternate model, they wish to use AZELLA as their primary assessment, and then also conduct additional reading, writing, and language assessments. They also ask for the grouping of students with similar fluency together, which includes oral, reading, and writing fluency. They believe they are within the regulation in their groupings, particularly for oral in Pre-Emergent and Emergent. In their reading program, they use Reading First which is closely aligned to AZELLA for Pre-Emergent and Emergent. It's a little less close a match for Basic and Intermediate ELLs. The writing groups would be grouped first by language and second by writing skills. They want to fill in the deficient skills for Intermediates while not neglecting anything. The only school that didn't achieve the minimum 12% reclassification rate is a school only in the second year of its Reading First program. Dr. Thompson emphasized that they are addressing the same goals as the Task Force approved models.

Last to speak was Ms. Gloria Rivera from Murphy School District. She stated that her district met with ADE regarding their proposed alternative model. She noted that Murphy ESD did share their reclassification rates with ADE; their reclassification rate is 15% for 6th-8th grade and 54% for Kindergarten through 5th grade. The ALPHA Group's proposed alternative model has classes taught in English with materials in English, the time period to proficiency is not normally to exceed one year, and the full four hours of ELD will be offered. Entry and exit will be based on AZELLA. The Alpha Group wants to find opportunities to include content within the context of teaching English language development. Ms. Rivera stated that their district challenge is making AYP. Students may be proficient but still have needs in reading and writing. They want to supply additional support in reading and writing. Murphy ESD will continue to be in dialogue with ADE.

Dr. Eugene Garcia stated that it would be good to see how state statute intersects with federal agreements and treaties with tribal entities. Tribal communities must live with both federal and state authority. He wants to discuss how they work with agreements. He also has questions about charter schools. He received a call from a charter governing board member who stated they were exempt from HB 2064 because they were exempt from Proposition 203. They receive no state dollars for the education of their students. Dr. Garcia noted that HB 2064 stated that it did apply to both public districts and charter schools and made no mention of Proposition 203.

He asked if this was a question for the Attorney General's office to decide. He's not sure if Proposition 203 overrules the statute. Mr. Maguire stated they would research this issue. Ms. Anna Rosas questioned: Once proposed models are adopted, will there be a form a district will have to submit to state which model they are using, for monitoring purposes? Mr. Maguire stated he would check. He presumed they would renew their adoption process. He thought that he changes made inside the Task Force adopted models would not require any formal statements.

#### **10. Discussion of future meetings**

The next ELL Task Force meeting will be held on May 8, 2008.

#### **11. Adjournment**

Mr. Jim DiCello moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Ms. Margaret Dugan. The meeting adjourned at 3:02 p.m.

#### **Arizona ELL Task Force**

Alan Maguire, Chairman